

The actual treatment of nature study materials is, as above stated, largely utilitarian — necessarily so, since nature study in this scheme leads to elementary agriculture — but the authors' ideal outcome for all the training given by the school through this medium is so broad and so fine that at once the whole system is raised above the merely industrial and acquisitive plane. In the light of this ideal, nature study becomes, let us dare to suggest, something better than an "efflorescence of the sciences" — as one eminent man of science phrased it to the present writer. The authors believe firmly in the attainability of this ideal; and with good reason, as experiments in some parts of the middle west are already beginning to demonstrate. Even those who have looked with some contempt upon the nature study movement will probably be able to discern in the following picture the delineation of a condition highly to be desired: "We do not want our country boys," say the authors, "to become merely efficient farmers who have learned to do certain things that they may make more dollars. We want them to be men who realize the larger applications of the laws and principles they are following, men who see and discriminate, who grasp situations, who think for themselves, and who have an abiding interest and enthusiasm for their profession, looking upon their fields, orchards, and meadows somewhat as laboratories in which to work out experiments to the end that they may do their work more profitably and enjoyably. We would have them men who take a keen pleasure not only in making their soil more productive, and in raising better crops and stock, but quite as much in making the home and its surroundings and the life within it more comfortable, more interesting, and more beautiful."

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## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

APRIL 13, 1909

The Club met at the American Museum of Natural History at 8:30 P. M. and was called to order by Mr. Charles Louis

Pollard, who presided in the absence of the president and both vice-presidents. The attendance was twenty-five.

Mr. Norman Taylor, chairman of the field committee, asked that authority be given him to issue a circular letter requesting the members to vote relative to the continuance of the field meetings. The Club voted that this authority be given.

The announced paper of the evening on "Botanizing on the Headwaters of the Saskatchewan and Athabasca Rivers"\* was then presented by Mr. Stewardson Brown. The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides.

Adjournment followed.

PERCY WILSON,  
*Secretary*

APRIL 28, 1909

The meeting was held at the New York Botanical Garden, with Dr. Tracy E. Hazen in the chair. Sixteen persons were present. The minutes of the meeting of April 13 were read and approved.

Dr. William A. Murrill, chairman of the cryptogamic section of the committee on the local flora, made a report in which the following suggestions were submitted :

(1) The publication of keys and lists of local species for field use ; (2) the preparation of a map of the territory included ; (3) coöperation with other botanical clubs within or bordering on this territory ; (4) coöperation with the field committee in the selection of suitable places for excursions and the care of cryptogamic material collected on these excursions ; (5) the use of a given space in *TORREYA* for notes upon and additions to the local flora ; (6) a joint meeting at an early date with the phanerogamic section of the committee on local flora.

Mr. Norman Taylor, chairman of the field committee, reported the results of a post-card vote on the continuance of the Club's field meetings as follows :

Non-committal or equivocal (mostly out of town members).....	38
For total discontinuance.....	9
For discontinuance during July and August only.....	20
For permanent continuance.....	28
Total number of votes received.....	95

\* Mr. Brown has promised an illustrated paper based upon this lecture for later publication in *TORREYA*.

In view of this showing, it was decided to continue the field meetings through July and August, as usual.

On motion, the Club voted to endorse the application of Miss Winifred J. Robinson for a grant of \$200.00 from the Herrman Fund of the New York Academy of Sciences.

The scientific program consisted of a discussion of "The Cactuses of the West Indies" by Dr. N. L. Britton.

The speaker referred to the distribution of cacti in the West Indian Islands and the regions inhabited by them; these are mostly on the southern side of the larger islands, where the rainfall is very low and where these plants are very abundant, certain portions of the southern side of eastern Cuba and of Jamaica being actual cactus deserts. On the smaller islands the cacti grow less abundantly and mainly at low altitudes. The genus *Rhipsalis* forms an exception to the general xerophytic distribution, its species growing on trees and cliffs in relatively moist regions. Southern Florida contains several species similar to some of those growing on the Bahamas and in Cuba or identical with them. After a preliminary description of the plants the meeting adjourned to the propagating houses of the New York Botanical Garden, where specimens of living cacti, including nearly all the known species of the West Indies, were exhibited and described.

PERCY WILSON,  
*Secretary*

#### FIELD NUMBERS FOR THE TORREY CLUB EXCURSIONS

The chairman of the field committee has started a series of field numbers to be used on the days that the Club holds its excursions. These will run continuously during the entire season. Those members who care to number their collections in accordance with this set of field numbers will have the opportunity to collate specimens thus numbered with notes which will subsequently be published in *TORREYA*. It is planned to publish all the determinations of special interest, but no attempt can be made to print the determinations of the common and widely dispersed plants.

NORMAN TAYLOR,  
*Chairman*